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INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Yugoslavia

SUBJECT Treason Trials

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As long as the Croatian Peasant Party has a party program which differs in the slightest degree from that of the Communist Party, there will be trials. Also as long as the Croatian Peasant Party, only as a symbol, not because of the leaders now in the country, retains its political influence, there will be trials. Further, whenever one of the Croatian Party members now in the National Front dares to voice an opinion on some subject which differs from the Communist Party opinion, there will be trials.

The Communist Party dares not at present begin a great drive against the priests of both faiths. The present policy is to create differences between the two and especially try to appease the Serbian Church. But when they deem that they are strong enough, the Government will surely undertake a showdown with the Churches.

All trials are following a set pattern in all Soviet-dominated Countries and may be classified as follows:

- (1) Trials with the aim of annihilating those organization and persons that could be militarily dangerous to the party domination.
- (2) Trials against political leaders openly hostile to the Communists.
- (3) Trials against persons who own property.
- (4) Trials against persons who wield some influence by the strength of their character.
- (5) Trials against those former political leaders who have joined the Communists but have later disagreed on certain points pressed by the Communists.

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- (6) When all the above have been disposed of, trials against party members -- purging.

All these trials have the purpose of intimidating people or persons who at a certain time would, could, or have expressed their doubt of the policies of the Communist party.

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They are signs of weakness, as they represent the constant fear of the regime that the people may resist and that an organization may be formed to overthrow it. The trials also are intended to remind the nation of what will happen to anyone who would step out of line. They are aimed at showing that the Government is watchful, and that nothing escapes its intelligence service. Finally, the trials are an attempt to show that the efforts of foreign powers and their intelligence are under control, and that there is great danger to anybody who would join them.

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The Communist Party has to secure for itself the monopoly of organization and it has to crush all those social forces which may become dangerous to it. The old party leaders are certainly such a force, and if they have not become absolute "yes men" (if remaining in the political life) they have to be eliminated. Being too much in the public eye, they cannot be just spirited away, so they are brought to trial on treason charges with intimidated witnesses. By this the Government also hopes to increase the intimidation of the people.

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